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La. Unemployment Drops in January; more than 11,000 new jobs added

The Louisiana Department of Labor, in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), continues to closely monitor the economic impact of the recent hurricanes on the business and household surveys in the affected parishes. In producing the post-hurricane estimates, BLS announced that a number of modifications were made to standard estimating procedures to better reflect the employment part of the civilian labor force estimates. For a detailed explanation of the effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on all of the BLS program's methodology, please go to <http://stats.bls.gov/katrina/cpscesquestions.htm>.

BATON ROUGE – The state's unemployment rate for January 2006 dropped to 4.8 percent, down from the revised December 2005 unemployment rate of 6.4 percent. More than 11,000 nonfarm jobs were added over the month.

The decrease was caused by a combination of factors: a continued reduction in the number of unemployment claims; a drop in the estimated number of unemployed from the monthly household sample survey; and the return to pre-hurricane methodology to estimate the number of unemployed with the model typically removing seasonal fluctuations in January such as layoffs at the end of the holiday season. These factors were responsible for the lowest January unemployment rate since January 2000 when the rate was 4.5 percent.

According to the estimates, the state's civilian labor force in January 2006 was 1,892,888, down from 1,909,833 in December. The total number of employed in January increased to 1,801,230, from 1,788,478 in December. Louisiana's number of unemployed for January was 91,658, down from 121,355 for the previous month. Nationally the unemployment rate was 4.7 percent in January 2006, 4.9 percent for a revised December rate, and 5.2 percent for January last year.

Unadjusted unemployment rates compare parishes and metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) to the state. The January 2006 unadjusted unemployment rate for Louisiana was 5.5 percent, down from the revised December 2005 rate of 5.8 percent. The unemployment rates for the MSAs were: Alexandria, 4.2 percent, down from 4.3 percent in December; Baton Rouge, 5.0 down from 5.3; Houma, 4.2, down from 4.4; Lafayette, at 3.8, was unchanged; Lake Charles, 4.5, down from 4.7; Monroe, 4.4, unchanged; New Orleans, 7.8, down from 8.6; and Shreveport-Bossier City, 4.3, down from 4.4 percent last month. Tensas Parish had the highest unemployment rate with 12.5 percent, while Webster Parish had the lowest unemployment rate with 3.1 percent for January.

Preliminary seasonally adjusted statewide total nonfarm employment for January 2006 was 1,750,000 compared to 1,738,400 for the revised December 2005 figure, for an increase of 11,600 workers. The sector breakdown was as follows: natural resources and mining, 47,000 employed in January, down from 47,400 employed in December; construction, 103,100, up from 101,600; manufacturing, 143,400, up from 143,100; trade, transportation, and utilities, 359,700, up from 352,400; information, 28,700, up from 28,500; financial activities, 93,900, up from 93,200; professional and business services, at 163,300, up from 162,800; educational and health services, 207,900, down from 208,000; leisure and hospitality, 169,800, up from 168,600; other services, 58,000, remained the same; and government, 375,200, up from 374,800 for the revised December figure.

For more detailed information on the January 2006 employment data for Louisiana, visit our Web site at <http://www.LAWORKS.net>, scroll over the tab at the top of the page for Labor Market Information, click on Publications & Reports, and select LMI Bulletin.

CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Area	January 2006			December 2005			January 2005		
	Employed	Unemployed	Rate	Employed	Unemployed	Rate	Employed	Unemployed	Rate
UNITED STATES	141,481,000	7,608,000	5.1	142,918,000	6,956,000	4.6	138,682,000	8,444,000	5.7
LOUISIANA	1,759,230	102,723	5.5	1,787,137	109,857	5.8	1,934,236	132,050	6.4
ALEXANDRIA MSA	65,248	2,872	4.2	65,271	2,949	4.3	62,573	4,073	6.1
Grant	8,116	331	3.9	8,119	348	4.1	7,783	565	6.8
Rapides	57,132	2,541	4.3	57,152	2,601	4.4	54,790	3,508	6.0
BATON ROUGE MSA	338,514	17,736	5.0	344,107	19,255	5.3	325,932	22,059	6.3
Ascension	41,693	1,874	4.3	42,382	2,079	4.7	40,144	2,493	5.8
East Baton Rouge	200,842	10,978	5.2	204,160	12,036	5.6	193,377	12,386	6.0
East Feliciana	7,773	394	4.8	7,902	386	4.7	7,485	627	7.7
Iberville	11,637	803	6.5	11,829	839	6.6	11,204	1,165	9.4
Livingston	49,063	1,884	3.7	49,874	1,949	3.8	47,240	3,082	6.1
Pointe Coupee	9,200	571	5.8	9,352	609	6.1	8,858	804	8.3
St. Helena	3,814	414	9.8	3,877	503	11.5	3,673	419	10.2
West Baton Rouge	9,937	499	4.8	10,101	531	5.0	9,568	734	7.1
West Feliciana	4,555	319	6.5	4,630	323	6.5	4,385	348	7.4
HOUMA-BAYOU CANE-THIBODAUX MSA	87,847	3,848	4.2	88,411	4,053	4.4	88,386	5,021	5.4
Lafourche	41,683	1,709	3.9	41,951	1,767	4.0	41,939	2,298	5.2
Terrebonne	46,164	2,139	4.4	46,460	2,286	4.7	46,447	2,723	5.5
LAFAYETTE MSA	120,440	4,743	3.8	123,777	4,849	3.8	117,101	6,094	4.9
Lafayette	98,880	3,838	3.7	101,619	3,949	3.7	96,139	4,676	4.6
St. Martin	21,560	905	4.0	22,158	900	3.9	20,962	1,418	6.3
LAKE CHARLES MSA	87,632	4,122	4.5	91,049	4,522	4.7	87,121	5,621	6.1
Calcasieu	83,406	3,930	4.5	86,658	4,323	4.8	82,919	5,348	6.1
Cameron	4,226	192	4.3	4,391	199	4.3	4,202	273	6.1
MONROE MSA	77,100	3,580	4.4	78,429	3,574	4.4	76,462	5,429	6.6
Ouachita	67,392	3,131	4.4	68,554	3,159	4.4	66,834	4,637	6.5
Union	9,708	449	4.4	9,875	415	4.0	9,628	792	7.6
NEW ORLEANS-METairie-Kenner MSA	393,558	33,275	7.8	394,349	37,120	8.6	582,331	36,541	5.9
Jefferson	Household sample data were not available.						214,837	12,369	5.4
New Orleans City/Orleans							185,671	14,214	7.1
Plaquemines							10,948	663	5.7
St. Bernard							29,010	1,861	6.0
St. Charles							22,854	1,311	5.4
St. John Baptist							19,206	1,437	7.0
St. Tammany							99,805	4,686	4.5
SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER CITY MSA	171,766	7,695	4.3	173,287	7,916	4.4	166,098	11,370	6.4
Bossier	48,802	1,921	3.8	49,234	1,928	3.8	47,191	2,795	5.6
Caddo	112,226	5,258	4.5	113,219	5,217	4.4	108,522	7,624	6.6
De Soto	10,739	516	4.6	10,834	771	6.6	10,385	951	8.4

CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Area	January 2006			December 2005			January 2005		
	Employed	Unemployed	Rate	Employed	Unemployed	Rate	Employed	Unemployed	Rate
NON-MSA PARISHES									
Acadia (Crowley) ¹	22,874	1,023	4.3	23,070	1,040	4.3	23,112	1,501	6.1
Allen	7,873	495	5.9	7,956	490	5.8	7,972	788	9.0
Assumption (Pierre Part) ¹	8,888	634	6.7	9,248	673	6.8	9,063	1,014	10.1
Avoyelles	14,293	891	5.9	14,594	906	5.8	14,421	1,293	8.2
Beauregard (DeRidder) ¹	13,227	684	4.9	13,352	681	4.9	13,408	930	6.5
Bienville	5,721	322	5.3	5,927	307	4.9	5,732	527	8.4
Caldwell	3,904	196	4.8	3,842	181	4.5	3,956	400	9.2
Catahoula	3,727	269	6.7	3,653	263	6.7	3,735	396	9.6
Claiborne	6,106	308	4.8	6,610	303	4.4	6,376	470	6.9
Concordia (Natchez, MS-LA) ¹	6,468	636	9.0	6,503	650	9.1	6,468	839	11.5
East Carroll	2,358	309	11.6	2,435	278	10.2	2,498	506	16.8
Evangeline	10,826	585	5.1	11,074	569	4.9	11,027	873	7.3
Franklin	6,672	590	8.1	6,824	561	7.6	6,947	876	11.2
Iberia (New Iberia) ¹	28,395	1,467	4.9	30,247	1,491	4.7	29,430	2,216	7.0
Jackson (Ruston) ¹	5,787	269	4.4	6,043	253	4.0	5,988	415	6.5
Jefferson Davis (Jennings) ¹	13,316	525	3.8	13,247	547	4.0	13,265	753	5.4
La Salle	5,406	215	3.8	5,373	194	3.5	5,451	343	5.9
Lincoln (Ruston) ¹	16,595	887	5.1	17,329	895	4.9	17,171	1,237	6.7
Madison (Tallulah) ¹	4,030	321	7.4	4,123	296	6.7	4,152	513	11.0
Morehouse ¹	10,112	790	7.2	10,574	753	6.6	10,601	1,386	11.6
Natchitoches (Natchitoches) ¹	15,589	863	5.2	16,430	873	5.0	16,129	1,162	6.7
Red River	2,912	214	6.8	3,226	204	5.9	3,042	375	11.0
Richland	7,591	494	6.1	7,704	468	5.7	7,765	823	9.6
Sabine	8,646	386	4.3	8,818	379	4.1	8,732	653	7.0
St. James	7,508	641	7.9	7,407	693	8.6	8,196	870	9.6
St. Landry (Opelousas, Eunice) ¹	34,080	1,846	5.1	33,535	1,911	5.4	33,595	2,470	6.8
St. Mary (Morgan City) ¹	19,529	1,357	6.5	20,030	1,421	6.6	19,902	2,197	9.9
Tangipahoa (Hammond) ¹	41,997	2,930	6.5	43,649	3,383	7.2	45,044	3,266	6.8
Tensas	1,824	260	12.5	1,918	283	12.9	1,944	273	12.3
Vermilion (Abbeville) ¹	20,974	999	4.5	21,855	979	4.3	21,416	1,484	6.5
Vernon (Fort Port South) ¹	19,224	1,130	5.6	19,945	1,075	5.1	19,283	1,211	5.9
Washington (Bogalusa) ¹	13,344	1,042	7.2	14,287	1,116	7.2	14,860	1,280	7.9
Webster (Minden) ¹	17,958	572	3.1	18,203	862	4.5	17,884	1,354	7.0
West Carroll	3,733	410	9.9	3,864	356	8.4	3,942	719	15.4
Winn	5,640	293	4.9	5,563	287	4.9	5,725	429	7.0

¹In addition to the eight (8) Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) in Louisiana, there are seventeen (17) Micropolitan Statistical Areas (MCs): Jackson and Lincoln Parishes combine to constitute the Ruston MC area. Civilian Labor Force can be derived by adding employed and unemployed. For related information or data, please visit:

www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm.